

A SOCIALIST COMMENTARY ON COLONIAL AFFAIRS

Venture

JOURNAL OF THE FABIAN COLONIAL BUREAU

VOL. 2 No. 7

AUGUST, 1950

MONTHLY 6d.

Incorporating *Empire*

Comment

AFTERMATH OF ENUGU

THE Report of the Fitzgerald Commission's enquiry into the Enugu shooting of last November* contains major criticisms of Government officials, of the leader of the miners' union, and of the Nigerian press. It is, indeed, a sad account of mistakes all round. The Enugu miners' leader, who is at present being accused in the courts of appropriating union subscriptions to his personal use, introduced sufficient bitterness and distrust into the atmosphere to make the working of the Colliery Whitley Council almost impossible; a newspaper published a false story that £80,000 was owing to the men; the management explained itself inadequately and with sufficient uncertainty to arouse suspicion; and, finally, when a Government Labour Officer, after the strike had assumed serious proportions, advised that another attempt be made to reason with the miners, the suggestion was rejected on the grounds that further negotiation would be interpreted as a 'sign of weakness.' Even the offer of the men's Clan Council to mediate was not immediately taken up, with the result that the Resident (who is commended in the Report) was actually in consultation with it when the news of the shooting came through. The tragedy came when the strike had gone on for days, and the Chief Commissioner (who was ill in bed) decided that the explosives should be removed from the colliery. Armed police were sent to cover the removal, but no

waggons or labour were made available; the quantity of explosives turned out to be six times the amount stated by the management; an engine and waggons were sent for from the town, and while they were awaited, tempers rose throughout the hot afternoon. The Commission condemns the Superintendent of Police for misjudging the temper of the crowd and ordering firing when it was unnecessary and for having insufficient control of his men, who went on firing until the Assistant Superintendent went along the line knocking up their rifles. Riots which quickly degenerated into looting broke out in four Eastern towns, and in what appears to have been an atmosphere approaching panic European women and children in outlying districts were swept up in Government lorries and taken to Enugu. At the subsequent Enquiry, some unforgivable statements were made in evidence, and local newspapers were constantly brought before the Commission for 'contempt.'

The Commission made detailed recommendations for the establishment of conciliation machinery for industrial disputes and for the establishment of Statutory Boards to take over from Government the management of such undertakings as the colliery and the railway. It asks for a higher status for the Labour Department, which is 'staffed with competent officers who undoubtedly have performed excellent work within the scope permitted to them.' Lastly, the Secretary of State has already sent to Nigeria a group of experts consisting of a senior official of the British T.U.C., an official of the National Coal Board with knowledge of the organisation of labour relations, a member selected in consultation with the British Employers' Confederation, and a Colonial Office Labour Adviser, who is well known in West Africa for his excellent work in Sierra Leone.

* *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria, November, 1949.* Colonial No. 256. H.M. Stationery Office. Also, Colonial No. 257, *Exchange of Dispatches between the Governor and the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

Reactions on the spot to the Report are most unsatisfactory. The chief trouble, after all, was that industrial machinery was so weak and so ill-used. But the newly-formed Nigerian Labour Congress has already stated its view that the delegation from Britain is unnecessary, and the *West African Pilot* has commented: 'With Government officials harbouring notions that contributed so conspicuously to the Enugu tragedy, all expert delegations from United Kingdom are a waste of time and money.' It would be more helpful if the experience of British labour relations which the delegation takes with it were used, by the Nigerian unions, which are not above criticism, and by the Government officials concerned. The National Emergency Committee has issued a statement which supports the Commission's condemnation of treating an industrial dispute as a political emergency, but which itself concentrates almost entirely on political issues. Except for recommending the removal of the present personnel of the Enugu Colliery Board, the National Emergency Committee has itself made no recommendations on the industrial problems which must be solved. Its contribution in this time of crisis for the country is negative. Sir John Macpherson, one of the best Governors any Colony has ever had, is asked to go because he defended his subordinates against what he thought to be unfair criticism in the Report, and the police officer, who, according to the Report made a *mistake*, and who has already resigned, is branded in the press as a 'butcher,' and his trial for murder is demanded. Worst of all, the Committee, which includes one of the lawyers who participated in the Enquiry, repeats a charge that was withdrawn as unproved at the Enquiry itself, namely, that the shooting was pre-arranged and deliberate as part of 'a common plan to break the strike of the Enugu miners by armed force in order to teach the Nigerian workers a lesson.'

The Government, on its part, continues to show a cold detachment. The National Emergency Committee declared July 4 a day of mourning and asked for a public holiday. The Government ordered all Government servants to go to work. This is understandable, but is it enough. The Government also mourns the death of the Enugu miners. Why not say so again? Why not admit frankly that there were mistakes on both sides, even if the National Emergency Committee is not prepared to do so, and use the tragedy as the starting-point for a new effort at constructive political education all round? The negative attitude adopted by both sides can only perpetuate the gulf between the Government and the people.

THE COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

THE Colonial Development Corporation has announced another project, this time in Swaziland. The Corporation has acquired 110,000 acres from Swaziland Ranches Limited, and is to use them for stock-breeding and for the cultivation of such crops as cotton, rice, maize and soya beans. At present only a small proportion of the land is irrigated. The Corporation intends to spend nearly £2m. on irrigating 34,700 acres more, and may possibly increase the area later to 70,000 acres. This is welcome news, particularly as it presumably indicates the intention of the British Government to retain control of the High Commission Territories and to carry out the economic development which is at present so badly needed. We hope that this scheme will also be a success from the 'human' point of view. Most of the present staff on the estate are South African, and there are no Swazis in responsible positions. If the Corporation, which is at present under a certain amount of fire for its alleged unsympathetic business methods, will really tackle the job of training Swazis, the new venture should be more than a mere economic scheme. We emphasise this particularly at the present time because the British-financed public corporations were originally conceived of in this spirit, but we have seen little evidence that the spirit has persisted. All kinds of criticisms have been levelled at the Overseas Food Corporation for failing to reach its crop targets and for alleged inefficient management. Controversy has raged on this subject since the resignation of its chairman, Sir Leslie Plummer, and the publication of *The Groundnut Affair** by Mr. Alan Wood, previously public relations officer on the Scheme. We do not propose to enter the controversy on management. What struck us about the book was its revelation of the conditions of the African workers on the scheme. The promised villages in which workers could live with their wives were sacrificed to the need for speed, so that all the sordid accompaniments to migrant labour grew up rapidly around Kongwa. It is true that the European workers went without houses and families also, but they were not tribal Africans. It is true that the British housewife needed margarine, but rations have never been so short as to justify the avoidable demoralisation of African workers. Worst of all, how did it happen that a store could be built and reserved for European customers only? These conditions were

* *The Groundnut Affair*, by Alan Wood. The Bodley Head. 12s. 6d.

not met with in all the groundnut areas, nor did they persist. But they should never have happened at all. It is also not irrelevant that Members of Parliament who wanted to table questions on such matters were unable to get answers from the Minister, who referred them to the Corporation. These Corporations are a new feature of colonial policy. They must work in a new spirit. We hope the Swaziland Scheme will become a model of what can be done to improve economic development while at the same time avoiding the evils hitherto so often attendant upon it.

INDECISIVE DECISION

THE International Court of Justice, the highest legal authority in the world, has pronounced on the position of South-west Africa, and it takes a lawyer to decide exactly where we all stand now. This territory was given as a mandate to South Africa after the first World War. Whereas all other mandates have since been converted into Trust Territories under the United Nations, South Africa has refused to do the same with South-west. Instead, she is integrating the territory into the Union, which, under the mandate, she was entitled to do as long as it continued

to be administered in the spirit of the mandate. The judgment now lays down that South Africa has no legal compulsion to place the territory under trusteeship; on the other hand, she may not modify its status without United Nations consent. The territory is, in fact, still under the League of Nations mandate, but as the League of Nations has ceased to exist, South Africa must present to the United Nations the reports and submit the petitions from the inhabitants which she would otherwise have submitted to the Mandates Commission. She need not, however, allow a Visiting Mission to investigate, as other Trust Territories must, because such visits were not contemplated under the old League of Nations. It is a nice muddle. In practice, South Africa will continue to 'integrate' South-west and do there as she pleases. But morally there is now one great difference. She is definitely required to submit reports and petitions, and if she continues to refuse to do so, she must be unambiguously branded as an aggressor, for her action will then mean that South-west Africa has been annexed. Britain will no longer have any excuse for sitting on the fence when the next resolution condemning South Africa comes before the General Assembly.

LABOUR IN THE LEEWARDS

By the Hon. V. C. Bird

(Member of the Executive and Legislative Councils of Antigua, and Chairman of the Antigua Labour Party and of the Antigua Trade Union Council).

WHEN Lord Baldwin resigned his post as Governor of the Leeward Islands, he made a statement listing twenty things he had done for the Colony. Amongst others, he had provided nine scholarships, built four workmen's houses in Antigua, paid for a water diviner to come from Jamaica, encouraged cultural activities, intervened personally in two strikes, and set up a commission to enquire into the question of unemployment, health and old-age insurance. These things Lord Baldwin did. What he could not do, as an individual, was solve the basic economic problems of the Leeward Islands. This cannot be done by the Leewards alone, for it involves questions of migration, diversification of crops, overseas markets and capital investment. Lord Baldwin is reported to have said on one occasion that the West Indies had more than their fill of experts, but none of them ever left threepence behind them on the plate.

Despite the difficulties, there has been considerable progress in the Leeward Islands since the war. In my own island, Antigua, our young Labour Party won the majority of the elected seats on the Legislative Council in 1946. At that time, we had clear objectives, and have seen many of them attained, but the major constitutional needs have not yet been satisfied: although we have universal suffrage we still lack an elected majority in the Legislative Council, and West Indian federation—which has long been supported by the Caribbean Labour movement—is not yet established. Local government, however, has been greatly improved with the establishment of village councils, and we now have an Appointments and Promotions Board for the civil service.

Our economic problems are being tackled by the Economic Development Committee of the Legislative Council. A loan scheme has been established to help small industries, and a Pioneer

Industries Act to attract larger firms has been passed. We are hoping for the development of a deep-sea fishing industry, through Government loans to private firms, and of cotton-ginning, perhaps with the help of the Colonial Development Corporation, but so far we have made no progress with pineapple and tomato canning or with rum distilling. Our principal industry is, of course, sugar, which accounts for 95 per cent of our exports and occupies nearly half our workers. Owing to seasonal changes in the demand for workers, it is desirable for the workers to have plots of their own, on which they can grow their own crops and tend their own animals. In Antigua the Government has already taken over 14 estates for land settlement, and has made a start with land clearing. There remains the problem of water supplies, which has long held back development.

I have dealt with problems of production first, because we are well aware of the need to establish a sound economy in Antigua. We hope for political advance, but we want self-government to be accompanied by good standards for our workers. We have built up a strong trade union movement so that the workers can enjoy their share of the prosperity we hope to achieve, and we have had great gains since 1939. Then wages were 10d. a day for unskilled workers who now get 5s., 5d. for women, who now earn 3s., and 2s. 6d. or 3s. for skilled workers, who now get 11s. 3d. or 13s. 1d. The cost of living has also gone up, but not so far as wages. Working conditions have also improved, with an eight-hour day and holidays with

pay, and many businesses have works committees. We are now trying to establish trade union conditions in an American concern which has shown unwillingness to grant trade union recognition.

On the other hand, unemployment is now worse than it was in 1945. During the war the American defence base absorbed some of our workers, but this has now closed down. Like other West Indian islands, we are unable to maintain all our growing population, and we look anxiously for the implementation of the Report of the Evans Commission on the possibilities of settlement in British Guiana and British Honduras, so that our population pressure may be relieved. This is our major problem.

Antigua also needs improved social services. Village dispensaries have been established, and the Government is encouraging doctors to live and work in the rural districts by building houses for them outside the towns. We need Government action to control rents and the price of foodstuffs and a good rehousing scheme for the many who now live in slum conditions. We must also try to take amenities to the rural areas, such as sewerage, lighting and even 'saucer' radios, which have been such a success in Central Africa.

We are proud of the achievements of our trade union movement, and will continue our efforts to make a better life for our workers. We hope that our problems may be sympathetically understood by our friends in Britain and elsewhere, so that we may receive the help from outside that we must have if our objects—which are those of Socialists everywhere—are to be attained.

As Others See Us

This is the first of two articles in which Rita Hinden describes some American reactions to British 'Colonialism'. She has just returned from a two months' lecture and study visit in the States.

IN theory Americans are confirmed anti-imperialists; to them the British are still—at least emotionally—the Imperial Tyrants of 1776. Open the sort of book given to immigrants about to be assimilated into American culture and the first page the eye is likely to light upon will contain references to the glorious days of the American War of Independence against British tyranny. There is, therefore, a natural sympathy for all those people still under the British 'heel,' and a disposition always to believe the worst of the Colonial Office, and the best of anyone opposing it.

It is a hard task, therefore, for any English Socialist to-day to try to explain to American

audiences the very real changes in the British attitude in recent years. The fact that all the major Asian dependencies—other than Malaya—are now free, and that many of the remaining Colonies are fast approaching a similar liberty still seems to prove nothing. The new independence in Asia is ascribed *wholly* to the success of the nationalist movements there, and it is simply not believed that there is any true advance anywhere else. 'If there is really a change of heart,' the average American asks, 'why do you not withdraw from all the Colonies immediately?' 'How long,' said a Negro College President to me, 'are you British going to keep your feet on

the neck of the Africans?' and there was no eloquence I could command to convince him that the foot was indeed getting off.

British visitors in the United States are thus, invariably, on the defensive. They try to tell of the good things being done in the British Empire—and there is much to tell—hardly realising that the mere existence of the Empire ruffles up American feathers. And their position becomes peculiarly awkward when they meet Americans who have had contact with African students (of whom there are many in the United States), or with African political leaders; and particularly when they meet American Negroes. Zik of Nigeria has done a great anti-British propaganda job in the United States. He is the hero of the African students there, and a well-known figure in the Negro community. Although his speeches are, to say the least, questionable in terms of accuracy, they have roused up all the latent feeling of black against white which is so strong a feature of American life, carrying progressive white opinion with it. American Negro sentiment is shot through with a bitterness against the white race deeper than anything I have come across among Asians or Africans. Although their own position is now improving gradually, and Negroes are the first to tell you about their successes in the law courts and the further successes to come, they cannot, very understandably, outlive the legacy of their past. The British are just another white race who must assuredly treat their black subjects as white Americans have treated them.

The Materialist Argument

In that atmosphere it is almost impossible to convince anyone that things to-day are different.

'But it is not in the interest of Britain to let the Colonies go,' was the constant objection I came across after explaining my own firm belief that we are rapidly withdrawing from West Africa. The only answer to that was to explain that in Britain's new economic situation, it was actually in her interest to behave in a new way. To-day we no longer need Colonies as an outlet for our surplus capital, for there is no surplus capital. We no longer need Colonies to provide jobs for unemployable younger sons of the aristocracy, or unemployed technicians, for there is no unemployment in Britain—on the contrary, there are insufficient applicants to fill the jobs standing vacant for years. It is more in Britain's interest to have wealthy Africans and Asians to whom she can sell her goods, now that so much of the market in the New World has been lost, than to have poor exploited peoples from whom to extract cheap raw

materials. These are facts, and they are among the few facts that count. It is striking how much more the materialist arguments weigh, than the idealist.

Another fact that can be appreciated is the danger in the Colonies of mixed populations in East and Central Africa, for Americans have had experience of a situation not altogether different in their own Southern States. Thinking people understand well enough that any immediate withdrawal from Kenya or Rhodesia would mean a repetition of the sorry history of the Union of South Africa, where Britain retired, leaving power in the hands of a white minority—to the great misfortune of the less powerful though far more numerous black populations. 'What would have happened to the Negroes of the Southern States,' one can ask with effect, 'if the South had won the Civil War?' Everyone sees, once it is explained, that the slogan of immediate independence in Colonies of this type, is not only misleading but perilous.

But the worst millstone around the neck of any Britisher in America is the Union of South Africa. Most Americans simply cannot understand that Britain is not answerable for South African politics. They find the greatest difficulty in distinguishing between Dominions and Colonies, and even when they do they can hardly grasp that South Africa is an independent Dominion. So they judge us by what Dr. Malan does, and even when the position is made clear beyond question, they still cannot understand why we retain South Africa within the Commonwealth. It is no good to reply with strictures on what they condone in their own Southern States, for a *tu quoque* is never an impressive argument.

When one reaches the higher political levels attitudes are, of course, based on specialised knowledge and are much more rational. In the State Department in Washington colonial questions are being studied intensively and with intelligence. African newspapers are perused, analysed, and reported upon; information passes backwards and forwards with American representatives on the spot; everything written on colonial problems is read and officials find opportunities to travel widely. Here there is a real understanding of Britain's position and actions; indeed one often finds the opinion expressed that Britain is moving too rapidly, that she will withdraw too soon and leave chaos behind her. But there is no suggestion as to what other policy we could pursue in the face of present-day opinion both in Britain

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COMPASS

THE political horizon in Africa shows no definite trend emerging. The most 'advanced' territory, the Gold Coast, now has a Commissioner for Africanisation; meanwhile the Convention Peoples' Party carried all before it in the Accra and Cape Coast local elections and in a by-election to the Legislative Council, despite the attempt at a monarchist party and the fusion of Mambii and Ratepayers under the 70-year old Dr. Nanka Bruce. In Nigeria, the constitutional deadlock continues between North and South; meanwhile an expert committee under Sir Sidney Phillipson is considering the financial relations between the three regions and the centre and the division between the three regions of grants allocated by the centre. Yet another committee has arrived from Britain to consider labour organisation in the light of the Enugu Report. Some attempt is now being made by the trade unions to put their house in order. The powerful Railway Workers' Union has even started a thrift society, and its President, Mr. A. O. Imoudu, has started a tour of branches to lecture members on increasing output. A statement issued by Union headquarters stresses the view that the effectiveness of political autonomy is dependent on the ability of a self-governing country to produce and maintain efficient and productive labour. In East Africa, the main news is of little-publicised territories. Zanzibar is to stop the cutting-out of clove-trees affected with *sudden death*; while the Governor of Somaliland has outlined present policy, the formation of district councils to link up in time with the new Protectorate Council. Further south, the European Unofficials are rampant in Northern Rhodesia, with proposals for freehold tenure (Van Eeden) and state-aided immigration schemes (Welensky). The bitterness is shown by rumours, that had to be scotched, about the theft of their own experimental crops by the African students of Monze Farm. Questions have also been asked about Barotseland, which contributes £35,764 to Northern Rhodesia's revenue, and has £180,786 spent on it. Nevertheless, last year no fewer than 2,926 white people (out of 30,000 in all) had incomes of over £1,000 a year; while the figure for liquor was £862,000, of which £810,000 went to Europeans, or £27 a year per head.



TWO rather discouraging events of the last month should not go unrecorded. The first is the retirement of the Governor of the Seychelles who has for years attempted a new deal for these derelict islands, where a handful of *grands blancs* of superior culture and no visible sense of social justice have led a carefree life with tax arrears going back for years, sometimes for decades. The main struggle has involved the attempt of Government to exact these dues; and it seems doubtful that they were successful. The second piece of news concerns the attempt to build up social centres for East Africans in the new twentieth-century manner. On this, the 1948 Tanganyika report is almost totally depressing: either the centres are dead, or they are the haunt of ne'er-do-wells. A report from Kenya even suggests that the centre at Dundori, recently opened with great pomp, is the target for spivs from distant Nairobi itself. From

Uganda we learn that the convener of an inter-racial association is alleged to have refused to account for money collected at the beginning of this year, nor has any progress been made, even to find a name. There is also little encouragement and no new thinking in France. The French Socialist Party at its recent meeting wanted Colonial assemblies increased in size and their powers extended, and universal suffrage advanced; it also wants 'effective equality' between citizens, and between colony and mother country in economic exchanges. Have we heard these proposals before somewhere? It also wants a more equal treaty with Tunisia, replacing the 1881 treaty of the Bardo. The French state has answered—by recommending wider local recruitment for officials.



IN the face of so much discouragement, which must be assessed in any honest survey, it is pleasant to chart the European contribution, starting appropriately enough with five important lighthouse projects around Africa. In the east of the continent, £200,000 are going on first steps to fight a new outbreak of locusts, in a campaign which has already met with Somali opposition. The Livingstone airport, the largest in Africa, is to be opened this month; it will have a screen painted entirely by the African pupils of Father Paterson at the Cyrene Mission. Finally, there are those forgotten creatures, the animals. A new faunal survey by Captain Keith Cauldwell shows what is being done in East Africa to protect them against ravages by poachers and tourist safaris. In Uganda, the U.S.P.C.A. is a live body—and here the main personality is an Indian, the veterinarian Dr. Fazal Din. For Nigeria, the R.S.P.C.A. have sent 19 humane killers and 21,000 cartridges, in an effort to alleviate the cruelty of ritual killing.



AN Anglo-American conference on Colonies was held in Washington on July 5. Have the Americans a solution? They certainly have the money, even though the Point Four programme proceeds very, very slowly, and private interest even slower still. The first really large colonial grant to Britain from E.C.A. has gone on transport in Africa. The men are even less easy to obtain than the money, mainly because of their wives. In their own areas, the Americans seem to be doing something with Puerto Rico, where corporations are developing power stations and secondary industries, and \$1m. is being spent on scholarships, largely technical, for other peoples in the Caribbean.



THE third force in the colonial world was outlined by Pandit Nehru in his recent visit to Singapore, when he described fading colonialism, the feeling for social



justice, communist dictatorship, and—nationalism. (June 17.) On the whole, however, South-East Asia is not now a field for remote speculations about colonial attitudes, but for a grim struggle for peace and for power, where 'British withdrawal would result in all manner of difficulties' (Nehru). In Malaya, over 2,000 Chinese Communists have been killed, captured or surrendered, since June, 1949, while the number of casualties among Chinese civilians, police and army, is slightly greater. The new Director of Operations, Sir Harold Briggs, has started a scheme to bring the 300,000 Chinese squatters under a proper system of order, starting in South Johore, where 7,000 families are being settled in protected villages. Nearly £700,000 has gone from London on general rehabilitation. As for the old Indo-China, talks were held in Pau between France, Laos, Cambodia and Viet-Nam, to try and keep a strong federal system, for development schemes, currency, trade, customs, and immigration. At the same time, in the Annamite towns, a campaign of assassination is now going on against public men who support the régime of Bao Dai.



THE *Financial Times* has been making heavy attacks on the Colonial Development Corporation and its Chairman, Lord Trefgarne. The Corporation has replied with a special press release, and Mr. James Griffiths in the House of Commons (July 5) expressed regret 'that a responsible newspaper should give currency to criticisms of this kind without making any attempt to check their accuracy.' Meanwhile, new schemes announced include 110,000 acres bought in Swaziland, to develop ranching, cotton, rice, maize, soya beans, a jute-substitute, and winter crops like potatoes; 300,000 acres in North Tanganyika may be bought for ranching near Essimingor. In Nigeria, the Corporation is going into partnership with the Hon. T. A. Oduola and the timber firm of Rushforth, to develop forest holdings in Ijebu, under the name of Omo Sawmills. A parliamentary question on the poultry scheme in the Gambia failed to elicit any definite reply, although it was hoped that exports would be starting in May. By all accounts they have—but to Sierra Leone.



THE postscript must be of the West Indies, where opposition is being expressed in the mainland Colonies to the official scheme for federation. The most noteworthy event is the issue of a joint statement by the United Kingdom Government and the West Indies and British Guiana Sugar Delegation. The British Government has been unable at this date to agree to buy, after 1953, more than 640,000 tons of sugar from the West Indies at a guaranteed price. What it has done is to agree that the figures will not be revised downwards before 1957, but will be revised upward if, in 1953, it is

found that the United Kingdom's consumption of sugar, which should by that time be unrated, has sufficiently increased. The delegations are returning to recommend to their Governments the acceptance of this offer by the British West Indies Sugar Association. We must not, however, forget another really important thing for the region—the triumph of their cricketers in Britain.

NORTH BORNEO

(Continued from page 8)

What war-stricken and backward North Borneo needs most of all (and her grand people deserve) are:—

For the next ten years, Government carried on with imagination and energy by enthusiastic Government officers.

A plentiful supply of labour.

Priorities in the supply of machinery, tools, and spare parts. It has been heart-breaking to wait year after year because manufacturers have kept back our small orders while they supplied large orders elsewhere.

Urgent consideration of the Estimates each year by the Colonial Office. The best months for outdoor work are January, February and March, and each year these are lost because the Estimates have not been passed or sufficient money sanctioned before April.

Firms who will put back into the Colony a large proportion of what they earn there; not send it home in the form of dividends.

If we can have these conditions fulfilled, Borneo should go ahead satisfactorily, despite its tragic war-time legacy.

AS OTHERS SEE US

(Continued from page 5)

and in the Colonies, let alone the blasts from world opinion. Nor could I get advice as to how we should handle the intensively awkward situation in East Africa. And indeed it was not their place to advise; it was sufficient that they understood and sympathised.

It is a great pity that the British are unable to explain themselves better abroad. In spite of a thousand justified criticisms of individual actions in these last years there has been a revolution in colonial policy. We seem unable to convey the import of this revolution—particularly in the face of a people whose history tends to distrust of us. I came away with the feeling that it was as difficult to convince the average American that we had abandoned tyranny as it is the average African. To own an Empire these days is a liability, rather than an asset.

Reconstruction in North Borneo

By a Correspondent

NORTH BORNEO became a Crown Colony in 1946, when the military administration which took over in 1945 came to an end. The British Government bought out the British North Borneo Chartered Company, and provided grants-in-aid and an interest-free loan to meet war-damage claims. Borneo had been under Japanese occupation for over three years, and war damage was far greater than in any other part of the Empire, not excluding Malta. All sections of the community had to start again from scratch.

The Government has drawn up a programme of development and rehabilitation, but the full resources of the Colony are not known. A team of surveyors is preparing a proper mapping, using air photographs taken by R.A.F. Mosquitoes. The American Air Force did an aerial survey in 1947. The known deposits of coal on Labuan and near Tawao have been inspected by experts, but their findings have not been made public. A census has been arranged for 1951, the results of which should help planning tremendously.

The main products at present are rubber and timber. Cutch is a valuable dollar-earner, firewood and dried fish are exported to China, and copra, tobacco and hemp are also exported. The Colony is now almost self-sufficient in rice. The only importer is the Government, and sales of both imported and locally-grown are strictly controlled. The controlled price (3s. 9d. for 8 lbs.) is probably the lowest in the Far East. It is quite plentiful at this price, although there are black market dealings in the best qualities.

Planters, private industries, commercial firms and the Government are all hampered severely by the acute shortage of labour. Very few estates have been able to take advantage of the post-war price boom. The largest rubber estate, for example, has been worked with as few as one-quarter of the tappers and coolies that could have been employed. Even so, the export trade has risen year by year, and I think it is true to say that the Colony and its peoples have never been so prosperous. With an adequate labour force producing to the limit, present conditions would ensure the sale of everything produced. The labour shortage will be felt particularly when the various development plans are ready to start. No large-scale development is possible until roads are built, and the ports need to be improved. The labour needed is considerable, and is very unlikely to be available in the Colony. Perhaps the contractors doing the building may be allowed to bring in their own labour.

Problem of Labour

I have heard it said that the labour could be provided from the Colony's own population if there were direction of labour. It is pointed out that the natives growing rice spend three months of the year doing so, and could be available for the other nine months. Also, the Chinese shops always seem to have a plethora of young men and women all living on the proceeds of the one shop. But such direction would be a most unpopular measure. Other sources of labour suggested from time to time have been Mauritius, the West Indies, Ceylon, and Java. The

Chinese might come, but other Malaysians are preferred. There is also the future to be considered. Already the Chinese are far more advanced educationally than the natives, and when the time comes for self-government, we would be likely to have the same problem as they have in Malaya—that is, how to give power so that no race is at a disadvantage. The Japanese would be hard workers, but are heartily hated. Another suggestion is that, during the period of development, when highly-skilled labour is needed, the possibility of employing Maltese should be explored. They would require higher wages than the others, and more spent on amenities, but in the long run this might be found cheaper. Certainly, the quality of work would be higher.

The main native races are Dusun, Bajau, Murut and Sulu. The Dusuns are rice-growers; the Bajaus, once feared as pirates, are the fishermen; the Murus live a semi-nomadic life in the jungle; the Sulu properly belong to the southern Philippines, and are mainly fishermen. There are also Malays, who dabble in most things, and the Javanese, who are for the most part coolies. There is a strong Indian element, mainly estate employees, and the police force has a number of Sikhs. Trade is mainly in the hands of Chinese, but the largest wholesalers and agents are British firms.

Products of North Borneo

Rubber is grown mainly on large estates owned by British companies, and timber is a monopoly (a bad relic of the Chartered Company days) in the hands of a British firm. Tobacco is grown by the Imperial Tobacco Company, and the hemp estates (formerly Japanese-owned) are owned jointly by the Colonial Development Corporation and Americans. The Chinese have small-holdings in rubber and are concessionaires in timber. There is a dearth of trained subordinate staff, artisans and clerical due mainly to two causes. The first and most terrible was that the Japanese, just before their surrender, massacred all English-speaking persons they could lay their hands on. In addition, there were over three years during which there was no education. Great strides against almost impossible odds have been made in building schools, finding teachers and in planning to let education reach all sections of the community. A Trade School was opened in 1949; the first post-war entrants for the Junior Cambridge examination sat at Christmas, 1949; a P.W.D. Foreman has been very successful in Australia, where he was on a scholarship provided by the Australian Government; over 100 schools have been built, and it is hoped that a Teachers' Training College will be ready in 1950.

At present the Governor has an Advisory Council of official and unofficial members. All sections of the community are represented, and it is to be constituted a Legislative Council this year. Work is now in progress for a scheme of local government for the larger towns.

(Continued on page 7)

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,

I would like to draw your attention to one or two points on Singapore. First, there has been a most marked swing of interest among educated boys since the war towards careers in technical and engineering jobs. And there is very little provision locally for training them—or for making use of them when they are trained. It is possible to make out quite an impressive-sounding list of openings for training and employment, but they do not nearly meet the demand. Boys who have money mostly go abroad for technical study, which is very good as far as it goes; but those who cannot afford this cannot all get what they want. I should like to see ample means locally for men and women to qualify as lawyers. Theoretically, this is possible by articulated clerkship, but it only happens once in a blue moon. Lawyers are essential in politics, and especially so in a closed economy like Malaya, where practically every educated man is either employed by Government or by a large commercial firm and cannot afford to risk offending his boss or his clients. But lawyers do not seem to suffer any disability from political activity, rather the contrary. In the Federation, of course, they are so pushed for political workers that they have had to permit most classes of Government servants to undertake as much public political work as they like. But I would rather see an ample supply of lawyers—and, incidentally, it would help to bring down the absurdly high cost of law at present, which does not do anything to make British justice beloved, except by the rich.

At the lower level, in fact the very low level of the Singapore slums, lies the basic problem of Singapore unrest, just as it lies among the squatters of the Federation. Government has simply neglected these people until they have no conceivable reason to feel the slightest affection for British rule. Singapore's slums have been reported on over nearly fifty years, always in much the same terms; they are only different to-day in housing a much larger slum population. No doubt you know what an immense task, and what an immense sum of money faces anyone who wants to rehouse adequately. An overall plan of development for the whole of Malaya seems to me the only final answer. That won't come quickly. Meanwhile, something ought to be done urgently for the slum-dwellers. Apart from housing them decently, it seems to me minor things could be done fairly cheaply. I should like to see some use made of cultural propaganda. Government could well afford to back traditional Chinese stage shows through an Arts Council, and to provide community centres in Chinatown. It should not be impossible to get an intelligent, responsible organiser who understood Chinese culture and who could slightly adapt their plays as a means of focusing attention in useful ways. And we might see a new drama develop and make a most powerful contribution to democratic thinking. If Russia can satisfy common folk with culture, why not we? Once Chinatown Chinese had become accustomed to using community centres, they could be led on to taking an interest in other things—lectures, political meetings, what not. At present it is almost impossible to get even a foothold for politics in the Chinatown slums because there is no scope for contacts, and no place to hold a meeting. Every community centre should also run a Citizens' Advice Bureau; and the adviser should have sufficient authority to be really useful to people—see that corrupt officials are checked, provide rough-and-ready justice *ad hoc*, protect the helpless in hard cases,

and so on. He could incidentally make Government, which at present appears to the slum-dweller as remote, unfriendly, solitary, slow, seem parental and useful.

There has been some useful work done postwar in village committees; but it lies away from the real danger area, and it has been based on the idea that people should help themselves first, then get help from the Government. Admirable, but not relevant to the situation in Chinatown. They don't understand Western-style democratic methods, and they need their pumps priming before they can start to employ them.

In short, something would be better than nothing, and could be very much better. If Mr. Griffiths can do anything about it, it would perhaps give us a few years' grace to get more important things in hand.

Yours, etc.,

Socialist.

Singapore.

Activities of the Bureau

Land in Tanganyika

The Colonial Bureau has written to the Secretary of State for the Colonies expressing disquiet over the continued alienation of land to Europeans in Tanganyika. In reply to Questions in the House the Colonial Secretary has stated that land alienated is unoccupied or unsuitable for African agriculture. The Bureau has pointed out that these arguments were also used to justify land alienation in Kenya with the present disastrous results.

Northern Rhodesia

The position in Northern Rhodesia is no more satisfactory and the Bureau has addressed a letter to the Colonial Secretary on two disturbing aspects. The first is European control over the Executive Council; the second is the disabilities of Africans as British-protected persons, and not British subjects, under the franchise arrangements.

West African Ferment

The latest pamphlet of the Bureau, written by Marjorie Nicholson, is entitled *West African Ferment*. This is a description of political and economic developments in the four West African Colonies over recent years and an analysis of the main causes of the present serious unrest. The pamphlet is for sale at the price of 2s.

Joint Conference with the Labour Party

In conjunction with the Labour Party the Bureau is organising a Saturday afternoon and evening Conference on September 23 at Dennison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1. The speakers will be Mr. Arthur Creech Jones, former Secretary of State for the Colonies, Dr. Rita Hinden, Secretary of the Bureau, and Mr. Jim Griffiths, present Colonial Secretary. The subject-matter of the Conference is *Challenge to Labour in the Colonies*. The first session will deal with *Labour's Achievements in the Colonies*, the second with *What the Colonies Mean to You*, and the third, *The Way Forward in the Colonies*. The price of admission is 1s. 6d. (bookings should be made to the Bureau at 11, Dartmouth Street) and refreshments will be available for a further 1s. 6d. This Conference, at the request of the Labour Party, is open to Labour Party members only. Those members of the Bureau who are also members of the Party, either directly or through their general Fabian or trade union membership are eligible to attend. The Labour Party is financing the Conference.

Guide to Books

The Making of Pakistan

By Richard Symonds. (Faber and Faber. 12s. 6d.)

Mr. Symonds's book should be read, particularly (at the present time) in West Africa. The first part is a straight account of the Muslim League case in favour of the partition of India, in accordance with the adoption of the Pakistan policy by the League in 1940. This part is not very impressive. 'From the elections of 1946,' says Mr. Symonds, 'the whole League leadership could not have checked the impetus to Pakistan even had it wished,' but did it wish? On his own showing, it was this leadership which first raised the cry 'Islam in danger,' and 'once it was raised nothing could silence it.' This is a very different thing from giving 'expression to a people's desire to form a distinct and independent political unit,' which is Mr. Symonds's summing-up of Mr. Jinnah's achievement. Mr. Symonds does not really analyse the 'two-nation' theory on which the demand for Pakistan was based, and does not tackle the question of whether the unity of India could have been achieved if the Muslim League leaders had weighed the full consequences of partition and *tried* to unite the people, as the Congress tried. The task might well have been beyond them, but an assessment of the possibility is not helped by a failure to discuss it. This part of the book is relevant to West Africa's current experiences, because it shows what can happen if a real attempt to achieve unity is not made from the beginning, but it does not show that unity cannot be achieved if it is desired. The rest of the book is of value to everyone, giving an account of the developments that have taken place in Pakistan since partition, about which far too little is known in this country. Only the chapter on Kashmir is not particularly helpful, ending as it does with the suggestion that India should 'make a generous gesture' because India 'has so much less to lose,' while 'educated Pakistanis believe that war would be no more catastrophic to their economy than the loss of Kashmir.' One cannot help feeling that Pakistan has a case, but that Mr. Symonds is no better than Mr. Jinnah was in persuading those who do not start off with his initial assumptions.

The Malays: A Cultural History

By Sir Richard Winstedt. (Routledge and Kegan Paul. 15s.)

The Malays is essential reading for all Europeans in Malaya, for the British in this country who influence Malayan affairs and for the leaders of the Indian and Chinese communities. In Sir Richard's words 'the only way to see beyond one's nose for the promotion of a race's welfare is to review the effect of past practice and endeavour and to study the social, political, economic and spiritual history of the race that is to be the subject of experiment.'

The author's conception of culture is broadly 'a body of ideas, practices and techniques that have been cherished by the Malays long enough to affect their way of life,' and so we are given the history of migration and language, beliefs and religion, literature, arts and crafts (with lovely photographs) as well as an examination of the political, legal and economic systems. In the first chapter we are held by the translation of two songs by the Proto-Malay Jakun, a picture of a wild pig and the song of a sick child.

What barbarians we must seem in our governing of

old civilisations when we read that European influences have not so far inspired the Malay as contact with the Hindu and the Javanese or even as Arab and Egyptian literature have inspired him. And yet Malay verses are so filled with acute observation of nature that there is a link with our own Wordsworthian poetry.

A just value is given to the effect of British protection on Malay economy, the markets that have been opened up, the new forms of cultivation introduced, particularly rubber, the training in the keeping of accounts and dealing with international trade. But, as in every other colony of South-East Asia, cheap, machine-made goods have ruined native arts and crafts and the Malay has not been able to cope with the capitalist system. He does not specialise or acquire capital, nor has he 'the sense of sin which makes work a virtue in itself,' as the author so pungently says, 'What the European regards as lost time, the Malay regards as time gained.' Now, when he is trying to meet the challenge of competition, he has lost ground to the Indian and the Chinese who actively block his advancement in commerce and skilled work.

And what of the future? The importance of education adapted to local needs, improved health which should produce more mental and physical energy, an awakening of political interest so that the Malays may regain the initiative lost through dependence on the British, and a raising of the standard of living through better methods of agriculture and fishing, a programme on which we all agree. In a country where protein deficiency results in serious malnutrition the average total output of a fisherman is about one-seventh of that in this country.

A useful reminder is given that Malay as a noun is used for persons or language, Malaya is a European term for the peninsula and Malayan describes an Asian or European living in the peninsula. There is an excellent bibliography which incidentally shows the unique contribution which the author has made in the course of a life-long study of the Malays.

New Forces in Asia

Compiled by Bruno Lasker. (The H. W. Wilson Co., New York. \$1.75.)

Those of our readers who have not made a post-war study of developments in Asia will find this collection of articles taken from a variety of periodicals ranging from *Venture* to the *Saturday Evening Post* a short cut to an understanding of nationalist and communist policies.

North Korea is covered by Anna Louise Strong, and there are four articles on South Korea, land reform, Korean National Youth, the first elections and the need of unity. The book is uneven, and the one chapter on terrorism in Malaya, though accurate and interesting, is insufficient. Czarist and Soviet policy are analysed in the concluding chapters, and illuminate the present situation by reminding us that the Japanese advance into Manchuria in 1931 came through Korea. The primary motive of Soviet foreign policy in the Far East is regarded as fear of Japan, controlled by the only country which threatens the Soviet Union, the United States, while Marxist philosophy leads Soviet statesmen to believe in the inevitability of a clash with the capitalist powers. The common front of the South-east Asian nations against colonialism has the backing of India, and is also linked in its interpretation with Soviet policy. With so little up-to-date material which sees Asia as a whole, this book can be recommended.

Parliament

University Training in East and Central Africa.

In answer to a question by Mr. Alport, Mr. Griffiths said that one woman and 49 men of African race were receiving the equivalent of university training in the United Kingdom in the current academic year. In addition, there were 184 men and five women from the territories other than Uganda receiving such training outside the United Kingdom. The figures of students of Uganda studying outside the United Kingdom were awaited. (June 29.)

Solomon Islands. Mr. Parker asked (1) what steps had been taken to deal with the Masinga Rule Movement in the Solomon Islands; (2) why in June, 1949, 250 people had been arrested on Ulawa and in August, 1949, 144 people on Santa Anna; (3) what steps had been taken to promote technical education and restore native councils at Auki in Malaita. Mr. Griffiths replied that the 'Marching' or 'Masinga' rule movement which had developed during the war in the Western Pacific had, by 1947, acquired a subversive character and had manifested itself in disobedience to Government authority and attempts to coerce the local population into obedience with its dictates, including the establishment of non-Government courts which had imposed fines on those who had been unwilling to co-operate. After firm measures in the latter part of 1947 by the local police force, the movement had lost ground but had recrudesced a year later, particularly in Malaita, and further arrests had had to be made at Ulawa and Santa Anna. There had been a general improvement in the situation over the last year, but fulfilment of plans for the political and social development of the Protectorate had inevitably been slowed down. A native boarding school financed from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds with special emphasis on agricultural training had been opened at Auki last October, but the establishment of native local authorities which had been successfully achieved in the western part of the Protectorate, had had to be postponed in Malaita. Further information would be given on the arrests and local councils when it was received from the High Commissioner. (June 22.)

Trade Unions in Malaya. In answer to a question by Mr. Gammans, Mr. Cook said that the present membership of employees' trade unions in the Federation of Malaya was 42,695, representing five per cent of the workers eligible for membership. The corresponding figures for Singapore were 49,266 and 18.3 per cent. (June 28.)

Cost-of-living Indices in the Colonies. Mr. Sorensen asked how many Colonies possessed and published index numbers in respect of cost of living; why such an index number was not published in Nigeria; and on what basis wage and salary increases have been granted in Nigeria and other Colonies where index numbers were not published. Mr. Dugdale replied that 27 Colonial Governments published index numbers relating to cost of living. The preparation of a reliable index in a Colony like Nigeria presented many difficult problems, particularly the wide variation in prices and expenditure patterns between one area and another. The war-time index had been discontinued in 1946 as it had been unsatisfactory. Preliminary work on a new index was now in hand. Cost-of-living indices were not the sole basis on which wage and salary increases were decided. The material which had been put forward by

trade unions and staff associations in support of their claims, together with the general economic conditions of a territory were the usual basis on which decisions were made. (June 28.)

School Buildings in Kenya. Mr. Rankin asked why at the end of 1949 half a million pounds more had been spent on European school buildings in Kenya than on Indian school buildings when the development and reconstruction authority in Kenya had decided that the needs of European and Indian school buildings had been considered approximately equal. Mr. Griffiths replied that the disparity had been caused by the greater cost of European school building, most of which was for boarders, and by practical difficulties in the Indian building programme, particularly in the acquisition of sites. Nevertheless, the Indian programme had not fallen behind the ten-year plan time-table, and, in the four years up to the end of 1949, 2,788 new Indian places had been provided compared with 575 European. (July 5.)

Educational Facilities in Malaya. Mr. Cooper asked what steps were being taken by the Government to assist in the provision of education in Malaya. Mr. Griffiths replied that he had recently approved grants to the Federation Government of over £223,000 from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds to provide for six new Malay schools and four new Chinese schools, for improvements and additions to 12 existing schools and for the extension of the Malay Women's Training College at Malacca. A new Malay Men's Training College has also been approved, as it was impossible to increase the training of men teachers by extending the existing college. A grant of over £565,000 from C.D.W. had been made last year to provide for the construction and equipment of a new Technical College at Kuala Lumpur, and a sum of £1m. had been earmarked for the building programme of the University of Malaya. Mr. Griffiths added that every school in Malaya was working on a double shift, and the demand for education was most urgent. He would do his best to meet it. (June 14.)

Farm Produce Prices in Northern Rhodesia. Mr. J. Hynd asked (1) to what purposes the African Farming Improvement Fund and the Native Maize (Controlled Areas) Fund in Northern Rhodesia were devoted; and to what extent they were applied to assist the African farmers to improve their agricultural technique. (2) What was the reason for the present price discrimination as between cattle, eggs and maize produced by Europeans in Northern Rhodesia and the same commodities produced by African farmers. Mr. Griffiths replied that he was making inquiries of the Acting Governor with regard to cattle and egg prices and also in regard to the Native Maize (Controlled Areas) Fund, and would communicate the reply when received. The price paid for maize by the Control Board was the same whether it was produced by European or African farmers. This year it would be 30s. 2d. per bag. African producers would be paid 21s. 3d. of this direct and the balance of 8s. 11d. per bag would be paid into the African Farming Improvement Fund. This fund was used to finance the improvement of African farming mainly by providing a good farming bonus of 15s. an acre to farmers who use improved methods based on crop rotation and conservation. (June 14.)

2 2 7

BASUTOLAND TACKLES ITS SOIL



Soil-Conservation Terracing in Basutoland

Basutoland's *Annual Report for 1948* stresses the territory's principal economic problem: 'the future of agriculture in Basutoland,' it says, 'is dependent on the extent to which the serious menace of soil-erosion can be overcome. Already in the lowlands the poor sandy soils, lacking in lime, phosphates and potash are largely exhausted through many years of monocropping, and the lack of humus.'

Since most of the cultivation must take place in the one-fifth of the country which is not mountainous, this is a serious warning indeed. Basutoland, however, is making headway. Large-scale measures were started in 1935, comprising contour-terracing, construction of earth-dams to check gully erosion and tree-planting. Extensive

tree-planting began in 1943, and mixed-farming demonstration units were established. One encouraging feature has been that tribal authorities have understood the purpose of the Government's work, and have co-operated. Educated Basutos have been trained since the war to carry out demonstrations, and grazing control has been successfully introduced. During 1948, the highest annual acreage of land-terraced land was recorded. Basutoland has had assistance from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, and has used it well. When he made his tour of Africa last year, Dr. Lowdermilk, the American soil expert, described Basutoland's soil erosion work as the finest that he had seen in Africa south of the Sahara.

For Reference

August, 1950

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